389 met by the Axis. The chief products made in the country are mining explosives and nitro-cellulose powder.

B. THE RUBBER INDUSTRY

383 Taking Axis Europe as a whole, the Rumanian rubber industry is of little importance. There is manufacturing capacity for motor tyres located at Floresti and at a much smaller plant at Braşov. The total number of workers employed in normal years was about 4–5,000, a large number of these being engaged on footwear manufacture, which was the chief product of the industry.

1. Raw Materials

Rumanian requirements of raw rubber had been increasing steadily in pre-war years until in 1938 they amounted to over 2,000 tons all of which were imported from British Malaya and the Netherlands Indies. It is probable that several firms produced reclaimed rubber for use in their own factories. Some of the scrap for this purpose would be of domestic origin. Import figures in [439] metric tons were :—

	1936	1937	1938
Crude rubber	1,273	1,835	2,066
Reclaim	181	214	33
Waste and scrap	305	581	506

Rumania had a small production of soft carbon black of the type suitable for miscellaneous uses, but there was no production of the hard carbon black necessary for tyre manufacture. This and other requirements of rubber chemicals would normally be obtained from the U.S.A., the U.K. and Germany. Supplies of sulphur were imported from Italy and Germany.

2. Principal Factories

The Rumania rubber industry comprises a large number of concerns producing footwear and general rubber goods, in addition to two factories concerned mainly with tyre manufacture. The larger tyre plant is owned by Banloc A.G., a company founded in 1937 with a capital of 200 million lei and supplied with technical assistance by Goodrich, U.S.A. The plant, located at Floreşti, was only completed in 1939. Its estimated raw rubber requirements were 2,500 tons per annum, and it has the capacity to produce 6,000 motor and truck tyres monthly, sufficient to cover 75 per cent. of normal Rumanian requirements. This capacity included some plant for making aircraft tyres. The other plant which produces tyres is on a much smaller scale, and is owned by Fabrica de Cauciuc at Braşov, with a normal capacity of 10–20 truck tyres daily.

According to the latest information, both these tyre plants were still in production at the beginning of 1943, when Banloc were reported to be producing between 100 and 200 motor tyres daily with technical assistance from Continental, Hanover, while the Braşov plant was producing 12 to 15 lorry tyres daily with technical assistance from Semperit, Vienna.

3. Imports

383 439 The chief item of imports in pre-war years was motor tyres, amounting to between 800 and 900 tons per annum. Since at that time Rumania possessed virtually no capacity for producing any of her own requirements, this figure approximately represents normal domestic needs. Footwear requirements, on the other hand, were normally almost covered by the large and expanding domestic output, so that imports were unimportant.

[35a]

383
[439] The figures of imports in 1938 in metric tons were as follows :—

Motor tyres	807
Motor tubes	60
Rubber footwear	221
Soft rubber (unvulcanised) ..	32
Rubber solution	27
Miscellaneous	173

4. Synthetic Rubber

It is planned to erect a plant with a capacity of 3,000 tons per annum in co-operation with German interest and using natural gas as the raw material. There is a second plan by independent interests to erect another plant at Ploesti using natural gas or oil as a starting point. Both these projects, however, are as yet in their initial stages and Rumania is, at present, entirely dependent on Germany for supplies of synthetic rubber.

[249] **5. Cultivation of Rubber-bearing Plants**

Rumania has been experimenting with the planting of *Kok Saghys* or Russian dandelion. During 1942 an area of 180 hectares (450 acres) was planted, which it is estimated will eventually yield between 20 and 30 tons of rubber. It is planned to increase the planted area in 1943, but it will be some time before any results of these measures will help substantially to alleviate the Rumanian supply position.

[439] **6. Present Position (July, 1943)**

Although Rumania has sufficient manufacturing capacity to supply most of her essential needs, she lacks supplies of raw materials. The industry is dependent upon Germany for supplies of synthetic rubber and some of her essential requirements of manufactured goods for her armed forces, such as aircraft tyres and some heavy truck tyres, are also being supplied by Germany.

C. HIDES, SKINS AND LEATHER

(I.) Pre-War Period

1. General

237 Rumania's plentiful supply of livestock places her in a comparatively favourable position for hides, skins and leather and the pre-war slaughterings were approximately as follows :—

	'000 *Head*
Cattle	427
Calves	500
Horses	100
Buffaloes	32
Sheep	1,374
Goats	100
Pigs	708

Of the leather produceable from the above animals, cattle, horse and buffalo are the most important, being used to a large extent in the manufacture of sole leather which is the backbone of the industry.

237
439 Rumania is not entirely self-supporting, although home-production enables her to restrict imports to a minimum. Imports and exports in 1937 were as follows :—

	Imports	*Exports*—
	tons	
Hides of cattle (including calf and horse)	2,930	Nil.
Other hides and skins (including sheep and pig skins)	340	558
Leather (including waste)	92	416

[35b]